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the X-MEN

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FEATURING: THE MENACE EL TIGRE!

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X-MEN! THE MOST UNUSUAL FIGHTING TEAM OF ALL TIME!

"THE POWER AND THE PENDANT!"

IN THIS CORNER: FOUR OF THE MUTANT X-MEN.. WHO, BEREFT OF THE TELEKINETIC ABILITIES OF MARVEL GIRL, MUST COMBAT A MIND-STAGGERING MENACE!

AND, IN THIS CORNER: THREE OF THE MOST TREACHEROUS TERRORS EVER TO TROOP FROM MARVEL'S TITANIC IMAGINATION!

Featuring: THE MILDLY INCOMPARABLE MENACE OF... EL TIGRE!

WHO SAYS THIS ISN'T THE MARVEL AGE OF CONCISE CREDITS ?.

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SPECIAL ACADEMIC ASIDE TO ARTWORK AFICIONADOS: WE OF THE BLUSHIN' BULL-PEN REFER TO THE ABOVE TYPE OF ILLO AS A SYMBOLIC SPLASH --- INTENDED TO UNDER-SCORE THE DEEP SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNIFI-CANCE OF THE SUSPENSEFUL SAGA YOU'RE ABOUT TO DEVOUR! (TRANSLATION: AFTER YOU READ THIS INCREDIBLE ISH, PLEASE EXPLAIN THE PAGE TO US!) SO ENJOY, MARVELITE--THE ACTION STARTS ON PAGE 2!!

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FOLLOWING THEIR EPIC ENCOUNTER WITH THE *LOCUST* LAST ISH, THE X-MEN AND PROFESSOR XAVIER ARE ESCORTING A WISTFUL MARVEL GIRL BACK TO *METRO COLLEGE*...

GOSH, JEAN, I WISH YOUR PARENTS WOULD GIVE UP ON THIS IDEA OF YOUR GOING TO A *REGULAR SCHOOL*...

SO DO *I*, BOBBY!

BUT, SINCE I CAN'T TELL THEM I'M REALLY *MARVEL GIRL*, I-- WAIT! *LOOK!*

SMOKE! IT'S COMING FROM THE OLD *ABERCROMBIE ORPHANAGE!*

STOP THE CAR, WARREN... *AT ONCE!*

LOOK.. OVER *THERE!* THE ORPHANAGE.. IT'S *ON FIRE!*

SOME OF THE CHILDREN MIGHT BE *TRAPPED* INSIDE! QUICKLY, ALL OF YOU...

WE *READ* YOU, PROFESSOR!

INTO YOUR *UNIFORMS*, EVERYBODY... *ON THE DOUBLE!*

SCANT SECONDS LATER...

THEY CAN NEVER KNOW HOW MUCH I *ENVY* THEM THE THRILL OF LEAPING INTO ACTION AS THE *X-MEN*... WHILE I MUST STAY BEHIND, LEST MY PRESENCE REVEAL THEIR IDENTITIES TO THE *WORLD!*

HEY.. SEVERAL OF THE KIDS ARE TRAPPED ON THE *ROOF!*

AND, THAT BUILDING MIGHT NOT LAST MUCH *LONGER!*

THEN, *FORWARD*, MY COWLED COMPEERS, WITH ALL CONCEIVABLE *SPEED!*

HURRY, JEAN! WE MAY NEED YOUR *TELE-KINETIC POWERS!*

I'M... SORRY, SCOTT! I MUST HAVE BEEN DAYDREAMING!

IT'S WONDERFUL TO DON MY *COSTUME* AGAIN---EVEN IF I CAN NEVER BE SURE THAT EACH TIME WON'T BE THE *LAST!*

THE WINGED MUTANT IS THE FIRST TO REACH HIS URGENT GOAL---

HEY, LOOK! IT'S THE *ANGEL!*

NONE *OTHER*, SON! DON'T WORRY, ANY OF YOU... I'LL FLY YOU TO SAFETY AS FAST AS I *CAN!*

BUT, THERE ARE *HALF A DOZEN* OF THEM... AND I CAN ONLY HANDLE TWO AT A *TIME!*

WOW! IMAGINE.. WE'RE GETTIN' RESCUED BY THE *X-MEN... IN PERSON!*

AND, INDEED, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, THE *BEAST* AND *ICEMAN* ARE APPROACHING IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE MANNERS...

Y'KNOW, HANK, SOMETIMES I'M NOT SO SURE THAT CLIMBING AN *ICE LADDER* IS AS GLAMOROUS AS HAVINGS *WINGS*, LIKE WARRY!

TUT, TUT, ROBERT, M'LAD! SUCH ENVIOUSNESS ILL *BECOMES* YOU, MY FROSTBITTEN FRIEND!

ON THE GROUND BELOW...

STAY BACK, PLEASE! THE X-MEN WILL RESCUE THE CHILDREN, IF ANY-ONE CAN!

OH, THEY MUST! THEY MUST!

HEADS UP, EVERYONE... HERE COMES THE ANGEL BACK FROM THE ROOF!

AND..HE'S GOT TWO OF THEM!

THERE YOU GO, LITTLE LADIES KOF!.. SAFE AND SOUND! HOW WAS THE RIDE?

I'LL..GO AFTER THEM IN A SECOND, KIDS! KOF!

IT WAS GREAT, ANGEL! BUT, WHAT ABOUT TIMMY AND THE OTHERS?

GOT SOME SMOKE IN MY LUNGS...CAN'T FLY BACK UP THERE...TILL I REST FOR A MINUTE!

I ONLY PRAY THAT I WON'T BE TOO LATE!

MEANWHILE, BOBBY DRAKE IS HAVING HIS OWN PROBLEMS..

ICEMAN... I CAN'T SEE! THERE'S TOO MUCH SMOKE!

JUST KEEP COMING, LAD! WE'LL BE SAFELY DOWN IN A MINUTE!

I'M WHISTLING IN THE DARK! THE HEAT'S MELTING MY LADDER FASTER THAN I CAN REPLENISH IT!

THEN, SUDDENLY...

OHHH!

IT BROKE! GOT TO SHIELD THE BOY'S FALL.. WITH MY OWN BODY!

X-MEN.. HELP!!

KRAK!

ICEMAN'S CALLING... BUT I CAN'T SEE HIM THROUGH ALL THE SMOKE!

MUST TRY TO JUDGE FROM THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE! AH..GOT HIM!

WHEW!

YOU DID IT, GAL!

CAREFUL, JEA--ER, MARVEL GIRL! THEIR TOPPLING BODIES MIGHT BE TOO HEAVY FOR YOU!

THANKS A MILLION, MARVEL GIRL! WITHOUT YOU, BOTH OF US MIGHT HAVE BEEN ---

SAY..YOU LOOK GROGGY! IS ANY-THING..?

I'M..FINE! JUST A BIT WEAKENED BY THE STRAIN!

WHAT ABOUT THE BEAST... AND THE OTHER THREE CHILDREN? THEY'RE STILL ON THAT BLAZING ROOF!

AND, INDEED, AMIDST THE FLAMING INFERNO THAT ONCE WAS AN ORPHANAGE ---

THE FIRE...IT'S GETTING SO CLOSE!

BE BRAVE, LITTLE PRINCESS! MY FELLOW X-MEN WILL ARRIVE PRESENTLY TO EASE OUR PRECARIOUS PREDICAMENT!

CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING, MISTER BEAST?

I HOPE!

I COULD PROBAB-LY STILL BOUND TO SAFETY MYSELF.. BUT I CAN'T! NOT IF IT MEANS LEAV-ING BEHIND THESE YOUNGSTERS!

HANG ON, BEAST! LET'S SEE WHAT THE POWER OF CYCLOPS CAN DO FOR YOU!

GOT TO BLAST THE BASE OF THE TREE AT JUST THE RIGHT SPOT.. LIKE SO!

TIM-BER!

ZZIT!

BRAAAK!

GREAT GOIN', CYKE!

I ONLY HOPE THAT THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY BEEN OVERCOME BY ALL THE SMOKE! I CAN'T EVEN SEE THEM FROM HERE!

I'LL GIVE THEM TEN SECONDS... THEN, I'M GOING AFTER THEM!

THE TREE'S TOPPLING AGAINST THE BUILDING... AT JUST THE POINT WHERE BEAST AND THE CHILDREN SHOULD BE!

YOUR SOLICITUDE IS GRATIFYING, BUT SUPERFLUOUS, CYKE, OLD BOY! THE NOBLE BEAST HAS THE SITUATION WELL IN HAND!

HE MADE IT... WITH ALL THREE OF THE KIDS!

LOOK! THEY'RE ALL SAFE!

PRAISE THE LORD!

WHEN THEY REACH GROUND, WE'VE GOT TO GO! I HEAR THE FIRE SIRENS SOUNDING!

EEEEEE

AND, THIRTY SECONDS LATER, WHEN A SPEEDING FIRE-TRUCK ARRIVES...

..THEN, WHEN THEY HEARD YOU COMING, THE X-MEN RAN OFF... VANISHED!

THEY'RE A STRANGE CREW!

FOLKS DISTRUST THEM BECAUSE THEY'RE MUTANTS ..YET THEY STOP TO HELP ORPHANS IN DANGER!

KEEP THAT HOSE COMING! WE'LL HAVE 'ER UNDER CONTROL IN A MINUTE!

MEANWHILE, IN A GROVE NOT FAR AWAY...

Y'KNOW, HANK, I'LL NEVER GET OVER THE WAY YOU CAN GAIN A FOOTHOLD ON ALMOST ANYTHING... EVEN THE SIDE OF A BUILDING!

ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR ICEMAN--ALL YOU NEED ARE SIZE THIRTEEN FEET AND THE AGILITY OF AN ANTHROPOID!

HOW ABOUT YOU, JEAN? OVER THE EFFECTS OF THAT STRAIN, YET?

I THINK SO, WARREN, THANK YOU!

WE'D BETTER BE GOING! JEAN'S COLLEGE CLASSES ARE DUE TO START IN LESS THAN A HALF HOUR!

THEN, AS THE SOMBRE LIMOUSINE GETS UNDER WAY ONCE AGAIN...

WHAT ABOUT THOSE CHILDREN, PROFESSOR? WHAT WILL BECOME OF THEM?

LUCKILY, SCOTT, I HAPPEN TO KNOW THAT A NEW ORPHANAGE WAS BEING BUILT TO REPLACE THE OLD ONE... IT WILL BE READY IN A FEW WEEKS!

THAT'S GREAT NEWS, PROFESSOR!

DURING THE CRISIS, SCOTT SEEMED SO WORRIED ABOUT ME... ALMOST AS IF HE CARED! BUT NOW THAT DANGER'S PAST, HE'S COLD--ALOOF!

PERHAPS I'LL NEVER SOLVE THE ENIGMA OF SCOTT SUMMERS!

BEFORE LONG, THE STATELY ROLLS-ROYCE DEPOSITS A PENSIVE, PERPLEXED JEAN GREY ON THE CAMPUS OF *METRO COLLEGE*---

GOOD-BYE, ALL! I'LL DROP YOU A LINE AS SOON AS I *CAN*---

BUT, I'VE GOT TWO *TESTS* COMING UP NEXT WEEK, SO I'LL PROBABLY BE VERY BUSY *STUDYING!*

OF COURSE, JEAN...YOUR CLASSES COME *FIRST!* WE'LL LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!

AND, TRYING TO FORGET HOW MUCH I MISS THE LIFE AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S *SCHOOL!*

WELL..WELCOME *BACK*, STRANGER!

AND *CONGRATULATIONS*...YOU JUST HAVE TIME ENOUGH TO UNPACK YOUR BAGS AND BE LATE FOR OUR *PSYCH* CLASS!

TED ROBERTS! HOW DID YOU KNOW I'D SHOW UP AT THE LAST *MOMENT?*

DON'T *ALL* WOMEN? ..THE *BAG*, PLEASE!

WHY, THANK YOU, KIND SIR!

HE'S A *DEAR!* MAYBE I'LL ADJUST TO LIFE AMONG HOMO SAPIENS *YET!*

AND, IN THE SLEEK VEHICLE PULLING AWAY FROM THE CURB, THE ABOVE TENDER SCENE IS DULY *NOTED*---

EVERY FIBRE OF MY BEING TELLS ME THAT I SHOULD BE *GLAD* JEAN IS MAKING FRIENDS AMONG HER FELLOW COLLEGE STUDENTS!

AND YET... *AM* I?

I *MUST* GET HER OUT OF MY MIND SOMEHOW... EVEN IF IT MEANS *LEAVING THE X-MEN*, ONCE AND FOR *ALL!*

NOR IS SCOTT *ALONE* IN DWELLING UPON THOUGHTS OF *MARVEL GIRL*---

SO...SHE'S TAKEN UP WITH THAT WOULD-BE *HEADSHRINKER*, EH?

WELL, SHE'S NOT THE ONLY FISH IN *WARREN WORTHINGTON'S* SEA!

AND, FROM HERE ON IN, I START DOING A LOT MORE *FISHING!*

PLEASE KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE *ROAD*, WARREN! WE WANT TO GET HOME IN ONE *PIECE!*

BUT NOW---IF YOU'RE STILL *WITH* US, THAT IS---OUR NARRATIVE SWITCHES LOCALE... TO THE STEAMING, LUXURIANT WILDS OF *CENTRAL AMERICA*---

AT LAST...MY YEARS OF PATIENCE AND TOIL ARE *REWARDED!* I HAVE LOCATED---THE HIDDEN PYRAMID OF THE MAYAN GOD *KUKULCAN!*

NOW I, JUAN MEROZ...KNOWN TO OTHER GEM-HUNTERS AS *EL TIGRE**...SHALL BE THE RICHEST MAN IN *SAN RICO!* FOR, LEGEND SAYS THAT THESE MAYANS WERE THE WEALTHIEST, MOST POWERFUL OF *ALL* ANCIENT PEOPLES!

RAMON! TOLOC! SET UP CAMP IN THAT *CLEARING!*

SI, EL TIGRE! WE DO AS YOU *COMMAND!*

EVEN RAMON'S VERY *TONE* SHOWS HOW MUCH HE AND HIS INDIAN COMPANION *DESPISE* ME! YET, THEY KNOW I PAY THEM *WELL!*

WILL WE BEGIN SEARCHING FOR GEMS IN THE *MORNING*, MASTER?

**TIGRE* (PRONOUNCED *TEE-GRAY*)---SPANISH FOR *TIGER*, NATCH! ---- *SEÑOR STAN.*

WITLESS FOOL! I HAVE NOT TRAVELED THIS FAR THROUGH UNCHARTED JUNGLE TO SLEEP NEAR A FORTUNE!

YOU WILL BEGIN DIGGING.. NOW!

BUT, MASTER... WE ARE TIRED FROM OUR LONG JOURNEY!

THEN SEARCH SWIFTLY SO THAT YOU MAY REST SOONER!

I MYSELF SHALL ASSIST YOU!

FINALLY...LONG, WEARY HOURS LATER...

OVER HERE! MY SPADE HAS STRUCK SOMETHING...SOMETHING HOLLOW!

IS IT THE TREASURE WE SEEK?

THAT WE SHALL KNOW WHEN YOU HELP ME MOVE THE HEAVY SLAB THAT BARS MY WAY!

SO, COME! I WILL BROOK NO DELAY!

AND, AFTER FRANTIC DIGGING..

BEHOLD! THE GREAT SLAB MOVES!

PUSH HARDER! I MUST KNOW WHAT LIES BENEATH!

THEN...

MY QUEST IS ENDED! WE HAVE UNCOVERED...THE SACRED GOLD OF KUKULCAN!

SI... BUT THE LEGEND TELLS OF A CURSE ON THIS LOST TREASURE!

CURSE? BAH...WHAT CARE I FOR ANCIENT SUPERSTITIONS---THE TALES OF OLD WIVES?

WAIT.. WHAT'S THIS?

A GLOWING STONE... FALLING FROM THAT GOLDEN GOBLET!

IT IS A STRANGELY-SHAPED ORNAMENT! YET, HALF OF IT SEEMS TO BE MISSING... CUT AWAY BY SOME HUMAN HAND!

AND...OF WHAT SUBSTANCE IS IT CARVED?

I, JUAN MEROZ, HAVE EXPLORED TWO CONTINENTS IN MY SEARCH FOR TREASURES HIDDEN BY ANCIENT TRIBES... BUT I HAVE NEVER BEHELD ITS LIKE!

STILL, IT MAY BE A PRICELESS GEM... OR IT MAY BE UTTERLY WORTHLESS!

TIME ENOUGH TO EXAMINE IT LATER! FOR, IT IS THE GOLDEN RELICS WHICH CONCERN ME NOW!

BUT, THE SKIES GROW DARK! I SHALL EXAMINE MY TREASURE FURTHER ON THE MORROW!

HOWEVER, THE JUNGLE NIGHT IS OFTEN FILLED WITH *BEASTS OF PREY*---AND NOT ALL OF THEM WALK ON *FOUR LEGS*---

HE SLEEPS *SOUNDLY!* IT SEEMS A PITY THAT HE SHOULD EVER *WAKEN!*

OUR MINDS ARE AS *ONE*, RAMON...BUT, YOU FORGET THAT THERE IS STILL MUCH *WORK* TO BE DONE UNEARTHING THE *GOLD!*

LET OUR MASTER NOW WORK FOR *US*..BEFORE HE *DIES!*

A WISE *THOUGHT*, TOLOC! FIRST I SHALL *BIND* HIM--- FOR THE PLEASURE OF WATCHING HIM *WRITHE!*

WE NEED NOT *FEAR!* HE IS UNARMED---AND I HAVE MY *MACHETE!*

MY MURDEROUS *LACKEYS!* SOME *SIXTH SENSE* WARNS ME THAT THEY *APPROACH!*

AND, ENRAGED BY THE SKULKING ATTACK, THE GEM-HUNTER CRIES OUT...

SPINELESS DOLTS! DO YOU THINK TO DISPOSE THUS OF *EL TIGRE?*

MAY YOU BE ENTANGLED BY YOUR OWN *ROPES*, FOR SUCH TREACHERY AGAINST YOUR *BETTERS!*

SUDDENLY, INEXPLICABLY, BEFORE THE TWO WOULD-BE ASSASSINS CAN MAKE ANOTHER *MOVE*...

CARAMBA! WHAT BLACK MAGIC IS *THIS?*

YOUR ROPE... WINDS ABOUT US ---AS IF *BE-WITCHED!*

WHAT..?

IT IS *TRUE*... THE LASSO OBEYED MY SPOKEN *WISH!*

UNGRATEFUL CURS! I SHOULD SLAY YOU WITH YOUR OWN *WEAPON!* BUT, IT IS MY WISH TO BE MERCIFUL... *IF* YOU SWEAR OBEDIENCE TO ME FROM THIS DAY *FORWARD!*

I *SWEAR*, EL TIGRE! *SPARE* ME!

AND *ME*, MASTER!

THEN I *RELEASE* YOU..TO RETURN TO *DIGGING!*

WE DO AS YOU *COMMAND!*

LATER, HIS MIND TOO ACTIVE NOW FOR THOUGHTS OF *SLEEP*, EL TIGRE PONDERS THE AWESOME OCCURRENCE..

AS, ABRUPTLY, A CAPRICIOUS FATE PROVIDES AN *ANSWER!*

THE GEM I FOUND EARLIER... IT FELL FROM MY *POCKET!*

OR... *DID* IT? IT SEEMED ALMOST TO MOVE OF ITS OWN *ACCORD!*

THEN, ASTONISHINGLY, AS HE RETRIEVES THE FALLEN FRAGMENT...

THE STONE PULSATES IN MY *HAND*... AND, AS IT DOES, I SEEM TO BE ABLE TO READ THE *MAYAN INSCRIPTIONS* ON THE BASE OF THE PYRAMID!

IT IS AS IF THEY WERE *SPEAKING* TO ME... TELLING ME AN ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE *STORY*...

...A STORY OF... THE *SACRED PENDANT OF KUKULCAN!*

ACCORDING TO THE HIEROGLYPHS, I HOLD PART OF AN ENCHANTED *AMULET*... CARVED FROM A *MAGIC STONE!* ALREADY, I HAVE RECEIVED *MENTAL POWERS* FROM IT!

AND, IT IS FURTHER WRITTEN THAT HE WHO POSSESSES *BOTH HALVES* OF THE PENDANT SHALL ENJOY *POWER WITHOUT LIMIT*... IF HE SURVIVES ITS DREAD *CURSE!*

THE NEXT MOMENT, AN UNHOLY *VOW* IS PROCLAIMED...

THE FULL MIGHT OF THE GOD KUKULCAN MUST BE *MINE*... CURSE OR *NO* CURSE!

I SHALL *FIND* THE OTHER HALF... AND NOTHING SHALL *STOP* ME!

WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT *YOU*, MARVELITE...BUT WONDROUS WERNER NEEDED A *BREAK* AFTER SUCH A SENSES-STAGGERING SOLILOQUY... SO IT'S *SCENE-SWITCHING* TIME AGAIN, AS WE PICK UP ON THE X-MEN A FEW DAYS LATER...

HOWZABOUT SOME SKATING ON AN ICEMAN-PROVIDED *RINK*, BEASTIE?

WHAT *SKATES* WOULD FIT THESE ENORMOUS PEDAL EXTREMITIES OF *MINE*, LAD?

MAYBE YOU COULD WEAR 'EM ON YOUR *HANDS*, HANK!

IF ONLY SOMETHING WOULD *HAPPEN*...*ANYTHING* TO TAKE MY MIND OFF *JEAN!*

THE FOLLOWING SECOND...

LISTEN! THAT SHRILL *NOISE*..!

REEEEEEEEEEE

IT'S THE PROFESSOR'S *CEREBRO* MACHINE...ANNOUNCING THE PROXIMITY OF A MUTANT--A *HOMO SUPERIOR!*

AND THAT USUALLY SPELLS *TROUBLE!*

WELL, WHAT ARE WE *WAITING* FOR? LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT CEREBRO...IT MAY BE AN *EMERGENCY!*

MEANWHILE, ON THE FLOOR ABOVE, AN ALERT *PROFESSOR X* ALSO RESPONDS TO THE SONIC SUMMONS...

IT IS FORTUNATE THAT I TURNED UP THE VOLUME OF CEREBRO'S *WARNING SYSTEM*, SINCE I HAVE MADE MY PRIVATE LAB ALMOST *SOUNDPROOF!*

I'LL ACTIVATE MY *MECHANICAL LEGS*,* AND GO DOWNSTAIRS *AT ONCE!*

REEEEEEEEEEE

*IN CASE YOU TOOK YOUR SUMMER VACATION ON THE *MOON* AND MISSED AN ISH, THEY WERE INTRODUCED IN *X-MEN #23*... *SUNBURNED STAN.*

WHILE BELOW...
WHERE'S THE PROFESSOR? PERHAPS WE'D BETTER CALL HIM!
NO NEED FOR THAT...HE'S COMING DOWN NOW!
EH? DESCENDING THE STAIRS.. IN HIS WHEELCHAIR?

OH, I SEE! HOW EMBARRASSING..
I NEGLECTED TO RECALL HIS TRANSISTORIZED METAL LEG BRACES!
THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE, HANK!
AFTER ALL, I HAVEN'T USED THEM IN A FEW DAYS..
BOY, ISN'T IT GREAT TO SEE THE PROF WALKING?
YES, BOBBY...

SUDDENLY, WITHOUT WARNING...
LOOK OUT! HE'S FALLING!
UHHNN!
FFFT!
GET 'IM, SOMEBODY!

BUT, BEFORE THE STARTLED X-MEN CAN ACT...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, BOYS! I'M PERFECTLY SAFE!
ZIISH!
METAL TENTACLES --- COMING OUT OF THE WALL AND GRABBING THE PROFESSOR!
BUT, HOW DID THEY GET THERE?

THE TENTACLES ARE MY INVENTION, DESIGNED FOR JUST SUCH AN EMERGENCY, AND ACTIVATED BY MY THOUGHT WAVES!
MY BRACES, IT SEEMS, STILL HAVE SOME SHORTCOMINGS! I'LL HAVE TO DISCOVER WHY MY POWER SOURCE FAILED!
HOW DO THEY WORK, ANYWAY, PROFESSOR?
I'LL EXPLAIN SOME OTHER TIME, BOBBY! RIGHT NOW, PLEASE WHEEL ME TO... CEREBRO!

AND, SCANT SECONDS LATER...
THERE'S SOME SORT OF NEBULOUS IMAGE FORMING ON THE SCREEN! IS IT ANOTHER MUTANT, SIR?
WE CAN'T BE SURE YET, WARREN! CEREBRO SOMETIMES REACTS TO CONDITIONS WHICH ARE QUITE SIMILAR TO MUTATION!
BUT, WHY CAN'T WE SEE HIS FORM MORE CLEARLY? CEREBRO'S NEVER ACTED THIS WAY BEFORE!
I CAN ONLY SPECULATE ABOUT THAT, SCOTT...

HOWEVER, I SUSPECT THAT THE POWERS OF THE BEING ARE AS YET INCOMPLETE! IF SO, THE WORLD MAY BE IN GRAVE DANGER!
THE MACHINE REPORTS THAT THE MUTANT-- OR WHATEVER..IS APPROACHING MANHATTAN MILES AWAY.. YET THE SIGNAL COMES IN CLEARLY!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, PROFESSOR XAVIER?
I'M SENDING ALL OF YOU THERE, AT ONCE! WE MUST LOCATE THE BEING... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

HENCE, BEFORE LONG, THE HIGH-FLYING *ANGEL* WINGS HIS WAY ABOVE THE SKYSCRAPERS OF *MANHATTAN*...

THE PROFESSOR INSTRUCTED US TO *ZERO IN* ON THIS PART OF THE CITY!

BUT, WHOEVER OUR QUARRY IS, HE'S SURE KEEPING HIMSELF *UNDER WRAPS!*

I DON'T SEE ANYTHING MORE SINISTER THAN THAT 'COPTER ARRIVING FROM *KENNEDY AIRPORT!*

BUT, IF THE WINGED MUTANT WERE IN THE VICINITY OF THE MIGHTY *PAN-AM BUILDING* SCANT MINUTES LATER, HE WOULD OBSERVE...

COME, BOTH OF YOU! TOLOC... BE CERTAIN YOUR *MACHETE* IS NOT SEEN!

AY, MASTER!

BUT, I STILL DO NOT UNDER-STAND! WHY HAVE WE COME TO *NUEVA YORK?*

SILENCE! IT IS NOT FOR HIRELINGS TO QUESTION *EL TIGRE!* YOU ARE MERELY TO *OBEY!*

MY FRAGMENT OF THE *PENDANT OF KUKULCAN* HAS UNERRINGLY GUIDED ME TO THIS SPRAWLING CITY... WHERE I SENSE I SHALL FIND THE *MISSING HALF*... AND INCREASE MY POWERS A *THOUSANDFOLD!*

NUTS! FOR A SECOND, I THOUGHT WE'D FOUND OUR MAN... BUT IT'S JUST SOME LATIN-AMERICAN TOURIST WEARING A *CAPE!*

BUT, IT HAS NOT YET TOLD ME *WHERE* IN NEW YORK THE OTHER PORTION IS LOCATED.. AND, UNTIL IT DOES, I MUST *BIDE MY TIME!*

AND YET, CEREBRO IS *NEVER WRONG!*

TAXI! TAXI!

TAXI

A POTENTIAL *MENACE* STALKS THESE STREETS... AND WE MUST *LOCATE* HIM!

THEN, AS THE UNSUSPECTING HANK AND BOBBY MOVE ON...

VEHICLE AFTER *VEHICLE* PASSES WITHOUT HALTING! MY PATIENCE WEARS *THIN!*

BUT, ALL ARE *OCCUPIED*..

DOLT! THAT DOES NOT MATTER TO... *EL TIGRE!*

AND, AS ONE CAB STOPS FOR A RED LIGHT...

BENEATH MY CLOAK, I SHALL GRIP TIGHTLY THE AWESOME *STONE*...AND SEND OUT A *MENTAL COMMAND* TO THE PASSENGER OF THAT AUTO...

UH-- DRIVER, THIS CAB IS GETTING... ER, *STIFLINGLY HOT!* LET ME OUT *HERE*, PLEASE!

TAXI

HUH? ARE YOU OUTTA YOUR *NEST*, MISTER?

I DON'T *GET* IT! ONE SECOND THAT JOKER IS YAPPIN' ABOUT WHAT A GORGEOUS *DAY* IT IS... THE NEXT, HE SAYS IT'S TOO HOT, AND TAKES OFF LIKE A *BAT!*

AND MY HACK'S *AIR-CONDITIONED*, TO BOOT!

HOW STRANGE! HOWEVER, IF YOU ARE *UNOCCUPIED*, WOULD YOU DIRECT MY ASSOCIATES AND MYSELF TO A GOOD *HOTEL?*

SURE, MISTER, SURE! IT'LL BE A RELIEF TO HAUL AROUND A *NORMAL JOE* FOR A CHANGE!

TAXI

GOT TO HAVE A DRINK OF *WATER*...EVEN IF IT COMES FROM THE *HUDSON RIVER!*

MINUTES LATER, AT A HOTEL NOT FAR AWAY...

I CAN SENSE THE *NEARNESS* OF THE REMAINING HALF OF THE PENDANT! THIS VERY NIGHT, I SHALL POSSESS ITS FULL, MATCHLESS *POWER!*

BUT, IN THE MEANTIME, I FEEL THE NEED FOR SOME HARMLESS *DIVERSION!*

THOSE THREE FIGURES... SOMEHOW, THERE SEEMS TO BE AN ATMOSPHERE OF IMPENDING *DANGER* ABOUT THEM!

AW, COME *OFF* IT, SUMMERS! YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A THIRD-RATE *FORTUNE TELLER!*

SOON, BACK AT THE ROOM WHICH THE INCOGNITO *X-MEN* HAVE RENTED...

SALUTATIONS, SCOTT! BY YOUR GLOOMY *VISAGE*, MAY I TAKE IT THAT *YOUR* QUEST WAS AS UNREWARDING AS BOBBY'S AND *MINE?*

I'M AFRAID SO, HANK! WHAT ABOUT *YOU*, ANGEL?

I COVERED THE AREA LIKE A *HAWK*, BUT ALL I GOT FOR MY TROUBLES WAS A PAIR OF *TIRED WINGS!*

THE HOURS DRAG ON SLOWLY... THEN, AS DUSK NEARS...

THE *NEWSCASTS* REPORT NOTHING SINGULAR... AND EVEN THE *PROFESSOR* APPEARS TO HAVE LEFT US INCOMMUNICADO!

AH--THE EVENING *TABLOIDS* ARE BEING DELIVERED TO A VENDOR ACROSS THE STREET!

MAYBE SOME OBSCURE, OFF-BEAT *NEWS ITEM* WILL GIVE US A CLUE! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK WITH A PAPER!

BRING ALONG A *TV GUIDE*, WILLYA? IT LOOKS LIKE A *LONG NIGHT!*

HOWEVER...

NOTHING! NOT SO MUCH AS A *UFO* REPORT! WE'RE UP A REAL *BLIND ALLEY!*

PUBLIC SHELTER

NO PARKING

IF ONLY CEREBRO COULD HAVE PICKED UP A *CLEARER IMAGE* OF THE MAN WE SEEK... OR BEEN ABLE TO *PINPOINT* HIM MORE PRECISELY!

UH!..WATCH WHERE YER *GOIN'*, MACK! I... HEY! WHAT *GIVES?*

BLAST IT! I CARELESSLY BUMPED INTO SOMEBODY... AND MY *SPECIAL GLASSES* FELL OFF!

I MIGHT HAVE *KILLED* HIM!

SORRY, MISTER.. THIS IS JUST PART OF MY, ER, *MAGIC ACT!*

ZAP!

MAGIC ACT, *NUTHIN'!* YOU MUST BE ONE OF THOSE *MUTANTS* I READ ABOUT!

A *MUTIE?* C'MON, CHARLIE... LET'S *GET* 'IM!

HELP... *POLICE!* I'VE BEEN ATTACKED BY A *MUTANT!*

ARE YOU *KIDDIN'?* I'M GOIN' THE *OTHER WAY!*

GOT TO KEEP ONE HAND OVER MY *EYES*... WHILE I TRY TO LOCATE MY LOST *GLASSES!*

BUT NO MATTER WHAT I DO, SOME OF MY *POWER BEAM* REFRACTS THROUGH..MERELY MAKING THINGS *WORSE!*

HE'S RUNNING AWAY! DID ANY OF YOU GET A GOOD LOOK AT 'IM?

NAW... BUT I'M SURE HE HAD THREE EYES! HE CAN'T HIDE FOR LONG!

COME BACK AN' FIGHT, YA CRUMMY MUTANT!

I HAVEN'T TIME TO STOP AND REASON WITH THEM! I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO THE OTHERS.. FAST!

A SHORT TIME LATER, HAVING MANAGED TO ELUDE HIS PANICKY PURSUERS, SCOTT DOUBLES BACK TO THE HOTEL, WHERE ...

SCOTT! WHAT'S WRONG?

I SUSPECT THAT SOMETHING MORE TRANSPIRED THAN SIMPLY PURCHASING THE TIMES!

JUST... AN ACCIDENT! MY PROTECTIVE GLASSES FELL OFF!

LUCKILY, NOBODY WAS HURT... THIS TIME!

WAIT... LISTEN!

THERE'S A SPECIAL BULLETIN COMING OVER TV! MAYBE IT'S ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, SCOTT!

I DON'T THINK THE NEWS SERVICES HAVE HAD TIME TO GET THE STORY ON ME YET! BUT, IT MIGHT BE NEWS OF THE MAN WE'RE LOOKING FOR!

THIS IS NO TIME FOR EXPOSTULATING! TURN UP THE VOLUME, BOBBY!

...ONLY A LITTLE WHILE AGO, POLICE WERE CALLED IN TO QUELL A RIOT AT A NIGHT CLUB ON 39TH STREET!..

HOLY COW! TAKE A PEEK AT THIS, WILL YA?

IN THIS EXCLUSIVE FILM, THE OWNER EXPLAINS TO THE OFFICERS HOW HIS CUSTOMERS WERE SUDDENLY FILLED WITH AN INEXPLICABLE FRENZY, AND BEGAN TO BRAWL WITH EACH OTHER ---

INEXPLICABLE? THAT'S THE KIND OF WORD WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR! IT CAN'T BE JUST A COINCIDENCE! LET'S MOVE OUT!

HOLD IT, ICEMAN! WE'VE GOT TO HEAR THIS OUT!

PICTURED HERE, IN A PHOTO TAKEN MINUTES BEFORE THE FIGHT BY THE CLUB PHOTOGRAPHER, ARE THE ONLY THREE CUSTOMERS WHO DID NOT TAKE PART IN THE VIOLENT FREE FOR-ALL!

HOWEVER, POLICE WERE UNABLE TO QUESTION THESE SPECTATORS, WHO DISAPPEARED DURING THE FIGHT!

HEY.. I RECOGNIZE THOSE CHARACTERS! BEASTIE AND I SAW 'EM HAIL A CAB BY THE PAN-AM BUILDING!

HOW PERSPICACIOUS OF YOU, BOBBY, M'LAD!

I SAW THEM MYSELF... CHECKING INTO A HOTEL A FEW BLOCKS FROM HERE! STILL, THAT DOESN'T PROVE ---

NO, SCOTT! BUT YOUR SUSPICIONS ARE CONFIRMED! ONE OF THOSE THREE IS THE MAN YOU SEEK!

IT'S PROFESSOR X... COMMUNICATING WITH US BY TELEPATHY!

I ISOLATED MYSELF MENTALLY FOR SEVERAL HOURS, SO THAT I COULD MAKE SOME DELICATE ADJUSTMENTS ON *CEREBRO!* NOW, THE MACHINE HAS ENABLED ME TO *ASCERTAIN* THE IDENTITY AND WHEREABOUTS OF OUR *QUARRY!*

THEN, WHERE ARE THEY *NOW*, PROFESSOR?

WE'LL DON OUR X-MEN ACCOUTREMENTS WHILE YOU BRING US UP TO *DATE!*

PROFESSOR XAVIER CONTINUES: "A SHORT TIME AGO, WHEN I FIRST LOCATED THEM, THE *THREE MEN* YOU JUST SAW ON TELEVISION WERE PASSENGERS IN A *TAXI*, AFTER THE INCIDENT AT THE NIGHT CLUB! THEY WERE ABOUT TO BE DEPOSITED AT THEIR HOTEL, WHEN..."

THANKS TO THE *PENDANT*, I SUDDENLY SENSE *DANGER*... JUST AS I DID AT THE PYRAMID OF KUKULCAN!

KEEP *GOING*, DRIVER... *EL TIGRE* COMMANDS IT! DO NOT STOP FOR *ANYTHING!*

"AND SO, WITH THE CABBIE UNDER THE MENTAL SWAY OF THE ONE CALLED *EL TIGRE*, THE VEHICLE SPED INTO THE NIGHT... AS TWO PERPLEXED POLICEMEN STEPPED OUT OF THE SHADOWS..."

I DON'T *GET* IT, SAM! HOW'D THAT LATIN GUY KNOW WE'D FOUND *MATCHES* FROM THIS HOTEL AT THE CLUB, AND WANTED TO *QUESTION* 'IM?

SEARCH *ME!* C'MON... LET'S HOP IN THE PATROL CAR AND *STOP* THAT CAB!

"WITH ITS HEAD START, THE COMMANDEERED TAXI MANAGED TO ELUDE THE POLICE! HOWEVER, *I* TELEPATHICALLY FOLLOWED IT TO ITS DESTINATION... THE *CITY MUSEUM!*"

YOU MAY DEPART NOW, CABBIE... WE HAVE NO FURTHER *NEED* OF YOU! BUT, YOU WILL REMEMBER *NOTHING* OF THIS ENTIRE EPISODE!

AND NOW BOTH OF YOU.. FOLLOW ME! WE HAVE *BUSINESS* IN THOSE DARKENED HALLS!

YES, SIR! I'LL REMEMBER... NOTHING!

EVEN *THEY* MUST NOT SUSPECT WHAT THAT BUSINESS *IS*... LEST THEY TRY TO OBTAIN THE PRIZE FOR *THEMSELVES!*

"THEN, SUDDENLY, AS I ENDEAVORED TO DELVE MORE DEEPLY INTO THE BRAIN OF *EL TIGRE*, TO LEARN THE *OBJECT* OF HIS MIDNIGHT QUEST---MY PRESENCE WAS *DISCOVERED!*"

SOME UNSEEN BEING IS ATTEMPTING TO *PROBE MY MIND!* I CAN *FEEL* IT! I MUST ERECT A MENTAL *DEFENSE..!*

THEN... *SILENCE!* HIS PSYCHIC PROWESS PREVENTS ME EVEN FROM *MONITORING* HIS FURTHER MOVEMENTS! THEREFORE, IT'S NOW UP TO *YOU!*

WE'RE STRAINING AT THE *BIT*, SIR!

THAT'S FOR SURE! STREET CLOTHES CHAFE MY *WINGS* AFTER A WHILE!

IT'S ABOUT *TIME* WE SAW SOME ACTION! I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN HOW TO *ICE UP!*

THEN, LET'S *GO!* BUT REMEMBER... WE DON'T KNOW THE *EXTENT* OF EL TIGRE'S POWERS... OR HOW HE INTENDS TO *USE* THEM!

MOMENTS LATER, IN THE LOBBY BELOW...

AH..TO *FLY* AGAIN! TO SOAR FREE... *UNFETTERED!*

WHAT IN..? THE *X-MEN!* ARE *THEY* GUESTS AT THIS HOTEL?

THIS IS THE QUICKEST WAY *OUT*, BUT I'M AFRAID WE'RE CAUSING A *DISTURBANCE!*

RIDIN' AN *ICEBOARD* IS A BLAST, TOO ...BUT I DON'T MAKE A *FEDERAL CASE* OUT OF IT!

I DON'T KNOW.. BUT I INTEND TO *FIND OUT!*

NOW IS SCARCELY THE OCCASION FOR *SUBTLETY*, CYKE, OLD BOY!

ALAS, THE *CHAGRIN* THAT CURIOUS CLERK WILL FEEL WHEN HE DISCOVERS WE REGISTERED UNDER *PSEUDONYMOUS SOBRIQUETS!*

HOLD IT, CABBIE! MY THREE EARTHBOUND BUDDIES NEED A *LIFT!*

TO THE *CITY MUSEUM*, DRIVER... AND MAKE IT *SNAPPY!* IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!

S-SURE, X-MEN... *SURE!* IF YOU SAY SO! H-HOP IN!

TAXI

WITHIN MINUTES, THE CAREENING TAXI CARRIES THE MUTANTS TO THEIR DESTINATION, AND...

DOWN *HERE*, GROUP! THE DAUNTLESS *BEAST* ONCE AGAIN LEADS THE WAY!

WHAT'S UP, HANK? HAVE YOU *FOUND* SOMETHING?

IF A *FRACTURED PADLOCK* AND A *FORCED DOOR* ARE OF POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANCE, THEN I CAN RESPOND IN THE *AFFIRMATIVE!*

Y'KNOW, BEASTIE, SOMETIMES I GET THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT YOU'RE *PUTTIN' US ON!*

THEN, WITHIN THE HALLS OF THE DARKENED EDIFICE ---

THIS IS A *BIG PLACE!* WE'LL HAVE TO SPLIT UP AND COVER THE DIFFERENT *SECTIONS!*

GOTCHA, CYKE!

YOUR WISH IS MY *COMMAND* FEARLESS DEPUTY LEADER!

I'LL HAVE A LOOK-SEE OVER *THIS* WAY!

SO... THE COSTUMED CLOWNS WHOM THE WORLD CALLS THE *X-MEN* HAVE LEARNED OF MY MISSION! BUT, IT SHALL AVAIL THEM *NOTHING*...

AND SO, NOT SUSPECTING THAT THEY HAVE NOW BECOME THE *HUNTED* INSTEAD OF THE *HUNTERS*, THE COSTUMED QUARTET GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS ---

KR EEEK!

HOW FITTING THAT THE NOBLE *BEAST* SHOULD CHANCE TO WANDER AMONG SUCH MEDIEVAL *MAJESTY!*

WAIT! THAT SOUND ON MY *RIGHT*..!

THE NEXT INSTANT...

YIPES! I'M BEING ATTACKED...BY AN EMPTY SUIT OF ARMOR!

KWAM!

MY ILLUSTRIOUS AGILITY SPARED ME... BUT HOW DO I FIGHT BACK?

AH...NO SOONER IS MY QUERY VOICED.. THAN AN ANSWER PRESENTS ITSELF!

KLUMP!

KLANK!

OUT IN THE CORRIDOR... I DETECT THE FURTIVE FIGURE OF MY WOULD-BE ASSAILANT! THE TIME HAS COME FOR ACTION!

THEN, TO HANK P. McCOY'S UNABASHED AMAZEMENT...

UHHNN! WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS!

THWIP!

I'VE BEEN ENSNARED BY AN ARGENTINE BOLA! NOW, THERE'S A FORM OF ASSAULT A SUPER-HERO DOESN'T ENCOUNTER EVERY DAY!

AND.. I'M TOPPLING OVER THE RAILING!

HOWEVER, VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE, AS THE SAVANTS SAY!

ONE NIMBLE BOUND ONTO THIS STRATEGICALLY-PLACED CHANDELIER, AND I'LL BE IN A POSITION TO DISENTANGLE MYSELF!

THEN, I KNOW OF ONE GREGARIOUS GAUCHO WHO HAD BEST LOOK TO HIS LAURELS!

BUT, AS THE BEAST COMPLETES HIS LEAP...

OOOOFF!

KBOP!

HAH! AS ONE OF THE BOLA BALLS SWUNG ABOUT, IT STRUCK THE FOOL ON HIS HEAD!

STUNNED, THE ANTHROPOID X-MAN DROPS TO THE FLOOR BELOW, WHERE, SECONDS LATER...

EL TIGRE BEGAN THE ATTACK BY ACTIVATING THE ARMOR OF A MEDIEVAL KNIGHT.. AND I HAVE FINISHED THE TASK!

THE BEAST WILL BOTHER US NO MORE!

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MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER WING OF THE MUSEUM...

I DON'T HAVE ANY *PSYCHIC SENSE*, BUT I'LL BET A DOLLAR TO A DEFROSTER I'M BEING *WATCHED!*

SOMEHOW, I THINK I'LL FEEL SAFER WIELDING THIS HOME-MADE *ICE CLUB!*

THEN, OUT OF NOWHERE...

SWOOSH!

ULP! TALK ABOUT *PRE-MONITIONS!*

IT'S A *MACHETE*.. HEADING *MY WAY!*

GOT IT.. JUST IN *TIME!*

WHACK!

THAT SETTLES *ONE* POINT OF CONFUSION, ANYWAY!

FROM NOW ON, I'M CONSIDERING OUR RETIRING TRIO AS DEFINITELY *HOSTILE!*

THAT LITTLE TOKEN OF AFFECTION WAS HURLED FROM THE NEXT CHAMBER... BUT, I DON'T *SEE* ANYBODY!

OH WELL, WHAT DID I *EXPECT*... FOR MY ATTACKER TO ROLL OUT A *RED CARPET* FOR ME? HE MUST HAVE RUN DOWN THOSE *STAIRS!*

BUT, AS THE YOUNGEST OF THE X-MEN REACHES THE SHADOWY STAIRWAY...

UH OH! WHEN AM I GONNA LEARN TO *THINK AHEAD?*

DING!

THE OLDEST TRICK IN THE BOOK... A *ROPE* STRUNG ACROSS MY PATH... AND I FELL FOR IT LIKE A TON OF *SNOW!*

PL

LUCKILY, HE RECKONED WITHOUT MY *ICE POWER*, WHICH ENABLES ME TO FORM THIS FRESH-FROZEN *SLIDE* BENEATH ME!

OR *DID* HE? I'M HEADING TOWARD A *STONE WALL* AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STEPS... AND THERE'S NO WAY I CAN *STOP* IN TIME!

I'M GONNA *HIT...!*

YOWPP!

HAH! A *SECOND* X-MAN FALLS! THAT LEAVES ONLY *TWO MORE!*

AT THAT SELFSAME INSTANT, IN THE NEARBY *PREHISTORIC EXHIBIT*...

THAT *OUTCRY*... I'M CERTAIN IT WAS *ICEMAN!* AND, HE SOUNDED AS IF HE NEEDED *HELP!*

I WISH!

IF THOSE BUSHY BABOONS HAVE *HARMED* HIM, I'LL MAKE THEM WISH THEY'D NEVER LEFT THE *JUMPING-BEAN FARM!*

BUT, BEFORE I CAN *RESCUE* BOBBY, FIRST I'VE GOT TO *FIND* HIM!

JUST THEN, AS ANGEL MOMENTARILY *HOVERS*, A MENACING FIGURE STEPS FROM THE MURKY BLACKNESS, AND...

DO NOT THINK TO TAKE *TOLOC* BY SURPRISE, WINGED ONE!

THIS ANCIENT *SPEAR* WILL END YOUR DAYS OF FLYING... *FOREVER!*

I DON'T KNOW WHO THAT CHARACTER *IS* ... BUT HE MUST HAVE TAKEN LESSONS FROM *ANNIE OAKLEY!*

IF I'D BEEN A FRACTION OF A SECOND *SLOWER*, I'D HAVE HAD THE WINGS OF A *REAL* ANGEL!

OKAY, BUSTER ... YOU'VE *HAD* YOUR LITTLE PRACTICE SESSION! NOW IT'S *MY* TURN AT BAT!

STRANGE! HE DOESN'T *MOVE*.. JUST STANDS THERE AS IF HE *WANTS* ME TO HIT HIM!

IN THE NICK OF TIME, THE SPEEDING WARREN *HALTS* HIS PELL-MELL PLUNGE, ONLY TO DISCOVER...

A *WAX DUMMY!* WHOEVER ATTACKED ME MUST'VE BEEN STANDING IN *FRONT* OF IT! HE FIGURED I'D KNOCK MYSELF SILLY BY FLYING *INTO* IT!

BUT THEN, WHERE IS MY *REAL* OPPONENT?

RIGHT *BEHIND* YOU, FOOL!

UHHHNN!

A *DART*... FROM A PRIMITIVE *BLOW-GUN!* IT'S... PUTTING ME TO... *SLEEP*...

YOU ARE *FORTUNATE*, WINGED ONE...

FOR, IN THE AMAZONIAN JUNGLES WHERE I WAS BORN, THE DART WOULD HAVE BEEN TIPPED WITH *POISON*... NOT MERELY WITH A *SLEEP-DRUG!*

I MUST INFORM *EL TIGRE* THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DE-FEATED... HE WILL BE MOST *PLEASED!*

AND, EVEN AS THE UNCONSCIOUS FORM OF THE ANGEL SLUMPS TO THE FLOOR... IN ANOTHER PART OF THE VAST BUILDING ...

SOMEHOW, I'VE GOT A HUNCH HE MIGHT SHOW UP *HERE*... IN THE *PRE-COLUMBIAN* WING!

FUNNY.. WE'RE STALKING OUR PREY AS IF HE'S SOME SORT OF *INCREDIBLE MENACE*... AND YET, WE KNOW ALMOST NOTHING *ABOUT* HIM...

... EXCEPT THAT HE HAS SOME SORT OF OMINOUS *MENTAL POWER*... AND HE WANTS SOMETHING FROM THIS *MUSEUM!*

WELL, SPEAK OF THE *DEVIL!* THAT MUST BE *HIM!* MAYBE WE'LL FINALLY GET TO THE *BOTTOM* OF THIS CHARADE!

WHILE MY TWO HIRELINGS KEEP THE X-MEN OCCUPIED, I SHALL ACQUIRE THE PRIZE I CROSSED A *CONTINENT* TO OBTAIN!

THEN, ABRUPTLY...

KLIK!

THAT NOISE.. SOMEONE *APPROACHES!* I MUST HIDE... TILL I LEARN WHO IT *IS!*

IT MUST BE ONE OF EL TIGRE'S *STOOGES*.. OR, MAYBE IT'S ONE OF THE *X-MEN!*

THE NEXT SECOND, BEFORE A STARTLED CYCLOPS CAN MOVE ...

ALL RIGHT, YOUNG FELLA... NOW SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE *DOING* H...

UNNHH!

IT'S ONE OF THE *MUSEUM GUARDS!* I FORGOT ALL ABOUT *THEM!*

HE GAVE AWAY MY *HIDING PLACE*.. AND NOW, HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S UNDER EL TIGRE'S *DOMINATION!*

CORRECT, CYCLOPS! I COULD NOT HAVE *PLANNED* IT ANY BETTER!

GUARD... HOLD HIM HERE AT *GUNPOINT!* AND, IF HE MAKES A MOVE... OR CRIES FOR HELP... *SHOOT HIM DOWN!*

HOW DID EL TIGRE *GAIN* SUCH FANTASTIC ABILITY? HE TOOK OVER THE GUARD'S MIND WITHOUT MOVING A *MUSCLE!*

AND--I'M *HELPLESS!* I CAN'T USE MY OPTIC BLAST AGAINST THE GUARD... BUT, HE'LL FIRE AT *ME* IF I MOVE!

HOLD HIM THERE, LACKEY... WHILE I SURVEY THE *ROOM!*

THEN, GUIDED UNERRINGLY BY THE FRAGMENT BENEATH HIS CLOAK, THE LEERING LATIN STOPS BEFORE A *GLITTERING DISPLAY...*

IT IS *HERE!* MY SEARCH IS AT AN *END!*

AMULET
CENTRAL AMERICA
MAYAN, C.A. SQUAD.

I HAVE FOUND THE REMAINING HALF OF THE *PENDANT OF KUKULCÁN!*

ONLY THIS FLIMSY SHEET OF *GLASS* STANDS BETWEEN ME--AND *POWER WITHOUT EQUAL!*

KRAASH!

AND NOW... THE GLASS BARS MY WAY *NO LONGER!*

THEN--EL TIGRE *ISN'T* A MUTANT! HE MUST RECEIVE HIS POWERS FROM THAT AMULET! BUT, IF HE *INCREASES* THEM--NOTHING ON *EARTH* CAN STOP HIM!

GUARD--YOU MUST LET ME *GO!* YOU *MUST...!*

NO! I DO... THE WILL OF *EL TIGRE!*

STAND STILL... OR I *FIRE!*

IT'S NO USE! IF ONLY THE *OTHERS* WOULD ARRIVE.. BUT, WHERE *ARE* THEY?

ALAS, LITTLE KNOWN TO THE HAPLESS DEPUTY LEADER, HIS FELLOW MUTANTS ARE LYING *UNCONSCIOUS*, IN OTHER SECTIONS OF THE SPRAWLING MUSEUM.. AS THE ONE-TIME GEM-HUNTER KNOWS THE RADIANT FLUSH OF *TRIUMPH!*

ALREADY, THE RAYS OF THE PENDANT BEGIN TO *ACT* UPON ME...

I FEEL *NEW POWER*-- BOTH MENTAL AND *PHYSICAL*---SURGING THROUGH MY BODY! AND, WITH EACH PASSING SECOND, I GROW *STRONGER!*

BUT, WAIT... THE MAYAN HIEROGLYPHS SAID THAT THE TWO HALVES OF THE STONE SHOULD BE *JOINED!*

WHEN THAT IS DONE, THE WEARER SHALL POSSESS... THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE GOD *KUKULCÁN* HIMSELF!

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SLOWLY, HALTINGLY, AS IF SENSING THAT HIS LIFE..INDEED, THE *WORLD* ITSELF... SHALL NEVER BE THE SAME ONCE THOSE TWO GLOWING FRAGMENTS ARE UNITED... *EL TIGRE* FITS THE TWO HALVES OF THE GEM TOGETHER!

IT IS *DONE!* THEY FIT... *PERFECTLY!*

AND NOW, LET WHAT WILL HAPPEN... *HAPPEN!*

THEN, AS THE BRILLIANT ORNAMENT IS PLACED ABOUT HIS NECK, THE UNEARTHLY STONE SEEMS TO *CATCH FIRE*... AS THE JOINED FRAGMENTS ERUPT WITH A FLASH OF *BLINDING LIGHT*...

THE *PENDANT*.. IT'S *CHANGING* ME... *TRANS-FORMING* ME...

BUT... INTO *WHOM?* INTO... *WHAT??*

AND, BEFORE THE UNBELIEVING EYES OF THE AMAZED *CYCLOPS*, THE PULSATING LIGHT DIMS... THE UN-LEASHED CATA-CLYSMIC FORCES SEEM TO CONGEAL INTO ONE MASSIVE, INCREDIBLE FORM.. AS A *RESOUND-ING VOICE* FILLS THE ECHOING CHAMBER ---

THE MAN CALLED EL TIGRE -- IS *NO MORE!* IN HIS PLACE, THE REINCARNATION OF THE MIGHTY GOD *KUKULCAN* NOW STRIDES THE EARTH.. OMNIPOTENT MASTER OF ALL HE *SURVEYS!*

NOW, LET HUMANITY BEWARE... FOR NOTHING CAN STAND AGAINST THE INVINCIBLE, IRRESISTIBLE POWER OF... **KUKULCÁN!**

NEXT ISH: **HOLOCAUST!**

MINUTEMEN

Blunt

Brian Azzarello